

JOE WARDY
MAYOR



CITY COUNCIL

SUSAN AUSTIN
DISTRICT NO. 1

ROBERT A. CUSHING, JR.
DISTRICT NO. 2

JOSE ALEXANDRO LOZANO
DISTRICT NO. 3

JOHN F. COOK
DISTRICT NO. 4

DANIEL S. POWER
DISTRICT NO. 5

PAUL J. ESCOBAR
DISTRICT NO. 6

VIVIAN ROJAS
DISTRICT NO. 7

ANTHONY W. COBOS
DISTRICT NO. 8

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JUNE 28, 2004
10:00 A.M.

The City Council met at the above place and date at approximately 10:12 a.m. Mayor Joe Wardy present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Susan Austin, Robert A. Cushing, Jr., Vivian Rojas, and Anthony Cobos. Late: Jose Alexandro Lozano arrived at 10:15 a.m. Absent: John F. Cook, Daniel S. Power, and Paul J. Escobar.

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AGENDA

1. Staff presentation on steps taken to develop the first phase of the City's municipal strategic plan adopted by City Council on December 4, 2001, and the City's instructions to assess community problems and needs for setting a community vision.
2. Progress Report on the Community Visioning Project conducted by the Institute for Policy and Economic Development (IPED) of the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) on behalf of the City of El Paso, and next steps for presentation of findings at various community forums and submission of a final report.
3. Discussion and Action on a plan of action to take the UTEP-IPED final report and develop a comprehensive municipal strategic plan for the City, including the formation of a Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee to assist technical staff in its development and presentation for City Council approval.
4. The City Council of the City of El Paso will retire into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to Section 3.5A of the El Paso City Charter and the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D, to discuss and take action on any of the following: (The items listed below are matters of the sort routinely discussed in Executive Session, but the City Council of the City of El Paso may move to Executive Session any of the items on this agenda, consistent with the terms of the Open Meetings Act.)

Section 551.071	CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY
Section 551.072	DELIBERATION REGARDING REAL PROPERTY
Section 551.073	DELIBERATION REGARDING PROSPECTIVE GIFTS
Section 551.074	PERSONNEL MATTERS
Section 551.076	DELIBERATION REGARDING SECURITY DEVICES
Section 551.087	DELIBERATION REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS

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Item 1: Staff presentation on steps taken to develop the first phase of the City's municipal strategic plan adopted by City Council on December 4, 2001, and the City's instructions to assess community problems and needs for setting a community vision.

Ms. Patricia Adatao, Deputy CAO for Building and Planning Services, introduced Council and the audience to the City's strategic plan and how it was drafted. She briefed everyone on the phases, explained UTEP's involvement and the scheduling of the upcoming community forums.

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Item 2: Progress Report on the Community Visioning Project conducted by the Institute for Policy and Economic Development (IPED) of the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) on behalf of the City of El Paso, and next steps for presentation of findings at various community forums and submission of a final report.

Dr. Dennis L. Soden, IPED – UTEP, gave a Powerpoint presentation (on file in the City Clerk's office) on the survey sampling conducted by IPED-UTEP with 1,200 telephone respondents.

Representative Austin questioned Dr. Soden regarding Table 3: "What positive image first comes to mind when you think of El Paso?", asking if people filled in a blank or selected from predetermined categories.

Dr. Soden answered people were free to fill in their own responses, open-ended responses.

Representative Cushing questioned Dr. Soden on Table 7: "In years, how often do you feel a city should develop a strategic plan?", as to how the respondents defined a strategic plan.

Dr. Soden answered that no one asked for a definition, although UTEP had a definition available.

Representative Austin questioned Dr. Soden what those definitions were.

Representative Rojas questioned Dr. Soden as to why the definitions were not given to the people who completed the questionnaire.

Mayor Joe Wardy asked Dr. Soden where the question in Table 11 had came from: "Would you favor a consolidation of the City of El Paso and the County of El Paso?"

Dr. Soden explained it came from UTEP and added that there is a high correlation between people who are against taxes and people who favor consolidation.

Mayor Wardy questioned when UTEP had conducted the study regarding Table 17: "Overall, how easy do you think it is to work with the City of El Paso, based on a scale of 1 to 5?" (1 equaled very easy, 5 equaled very difficult)

Dr. Soden explained the study had been conducted the last week of April through the 1st week of May.

Representative Austin questioned Dr. Soden on Table 21: "Would you say taxes are too low, just right or too high?", and how the question was presented to the people who took the survey.

Dr. Soden explained that people were given three fixed choices to pick from: "too low", "just right", or "too high".

Mayor Wardy questioned Dr. Soden on Table 23: "Have you ever visited the City's website?" and why Dr. Soden thought that the City's website would have a higher internet usage than other communities of the same composition.

Dr. Soden responded that El Paso has a range of income levels across all ethnic categories.

Representative Rojas questioned Dr. Soden on Table 25: "How is your contact most often made?", as to how the respondents for the survey were selected.

Dr. Soden explained that a prepackaged program of random phone numbers were selected, of which fax numbers were screened out. He stated that phone calls were made between the hours of 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. Of the 1,800 phone calls randomly selected, 1,200 answered the long survey questions. He noted that he was one of the callers randomly selected.

Representative Austin questioned Dr. Soden on Table 26: "How would you rate your experience with city employees in the following areas using a scale from 1 to 5?" and questioned if the responses had been triple checked, as the information was contrary to the responses that preceded it and to Table 27 which follows it.

Representative Lozano asked Mr. Jim Martinez, Chief Administrative Officer, as to his response on the results of Table 26 and what improvements Mr. Martinez would make.

Mr. Martinez explained that first the results should be rechecked, then interpreted in the context of the rest of the data.

Mayor Wardy commented that the public perceives dealing with the City as a negative experience.

Representative Lozano commented that he has received comments indicating the City is improving.

Representative Austin questioned whether Table 26 was specific to individuals who have had contact with a City employee or if the question was asked of all respondents including over 50% who said they have had no contact with the City.

Dr. Soden responded that the question was asked of everyone, including those who have had no contact with the City.

Representative Lozano claimed that Table 26 applied only to City Hall employees, not Fire Department or off-site departments. He said he does not think that the information was correct and invited the public to speak with their City Representatives if they are or were not properly taken care while conducting business at City Hall.

Dr. Soden asked if the Council would like to see the survey process conducted differently, and if so, he recommended they funnel their suggestions through Ms. Adatao or Mr. Martinez.

Representative Cushing asked about the gender distribution and whether or not the women to men ratio is a result of the time of day that the calls were placed. He wondered if the fact that 30% of the respondents were male affected the data.

Representative Austin pointed out that almost 18% of the respondents were under the age of 25. She questioned what role the survey played in the City's development of a strategic plan.

Dr. Soden explained that the first step would be to ask what areas could be fixed immediately, then those that require long term (five to 10 years), then those that require medium term (two to five years) fixes and the second step would be to look at pockets of the data and analyze those more deeply as to age brackets, area of town, etc.

Mr. Martinez explained that late summer of last year the new administration began to analyze the existing strategic plan and were dissatisfied. He stated that the administration wanted to first identify where the City needs to go by data collection of public responses and by public input through IPED at UTEP.

Representative Austin spoke about her hopes to utilize IPED in more strategic ways and to survey other cities on how they do things differently. She stated she would like to know through what encounters it is that the majority of citizens have contact with the City.

Mayor Wardy commented on the lack of continuous process improvement and more widespread availability and utilization of technology as the major operating problems of the City.

Representative Austin explained that it was imperative that the City Manager play an important role in the development of the overarching strategies and she would not like to go too far down the road without him/her.

Representative Cushing stated that the first year of City Manager/Council form of government is going to be challenging for City Council and will require the Council's active involvement.

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Item 3: Discussion and Action on a plan of action to take the UTEP-IPED final report and develop a comprehensive municipal strategic plan for the City, including the formation of a Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee to assist technical staff in its development and presentation for City Council approval.

Ms. Patricia Adatao, Deputy CAO for Building and Planning Services, explained that an independent group should develop the next step of the strategic plan.

Mayor Joe Wardy stated that the plan developed by the City's Department Heads was a good first step, but now the citizens and the private sector need to be brought into the process to determine the areas the City should concentrate on.

Representative Austin questioned Ms. Adatao as to what the City was looking for from IPED.

Ms. Adatao responded that the IPED was developing three parts of public involvement:

- 1. Meet with Community leaders;
- 2. 1,200 telephone survey respondents; and
- 3. Community Forums

Mayor Wardy explained that some Department Heads did a tremendous job in formulating their strategic plans, while others did not seem to understand the process fully.

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Motion made by Representative Austin, seconded by Representative Lozano and unanimously carried to adjourn this meeting at 11:17 a.m.

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APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Momsen", is written over a horizontal line.

Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk